

REPORT

Of the select committee, appointed on the 31st of December last, to consider and report upon the petition of Augustus F. Cammann.

FEBRUARY 4, 1824.

Read, and ordered to lie upon the table.

The select committee, to whom was referred the memorial of Augustus F. Cammann, praying the assistance of Congress, in working a Copper-mine in the state of New Jersey,

REPORT:

That the documents accompanying this memorial, consisting of certificates from several gentlemen of acknowledged science and great respectability, prove, that, in the county of Somerset, in the state of New Jersey, there is a range of hills which contain, in considerable abundance, copper ore of the best quality. Specimens of this ore were examined by Professors Silliman and Griscom, and by Drs. Mitchell and Hosack, and they all concur in stating, that the ore; (which is a red oxide of copper) is equal in beauty and richness to any in the mines of Cornwall, or elsewhere; and, they express an opinion that there are extensive deposits of that metal in the formation whence the specimens were taken.

It appears, from a certificate of Dr. John Patten Emmet, of New York, who very carefully examined and analyzed this ore, that he found it uncommonly rich, containing between seventy-three and eighty-three per cent. of metallic copper.

General Bernard visited these mines, and certifies that, in comparing them with those he had seen in Europe, they appeared to him to afford every facility to be worked, both with respect to the removal of the ore, as well as the draining of the galleries.

Professors Nuttall and Renwick and Dr. Torrey, gentlemen distinguished for their scientific acquirements, especially in Chemistry and Mineralogy, visited these mines. Dr. Torrey states, that the ore is extremely rich, and, in his opinion, will be found in great abundance, provided the works are carried on with the same skill with which they have been commenced, and that, owing to their position, the water can be drained from them with the greatest ease. Profes-

sor Nuttall says, on examination, he found, that they have already been worked to such an extent as to afford a reasonable hope of making a valuable disclosure of mineral riches, and that the ore is equal to any he has seen. Professor Renwick declares, after his examination of these mines, that they are now easily worked and readily accessible, and that the excavations can never be attended with great difficulty, as even the deepest of them may be drained by levels carved in, on the face of the hills, in which the veins of the ore are situated—that the ore is extremely rich, and, as far as he could judge, abundant; and that the specimens which he brought away yielded, with earthy fluxes, (with which it does not smelt easily, nor to advantage) fifty per cent. of pure metallic copper.

On a view of the whole evidence accompanying the memorial, your committee are disposed to form a favorable opinion of these mines, and cannot hesitate to express their belief, from the quality and probable abundance of the ore, and from the peculiar advantage of the location of the mines, both as respects the facility of working them, and of transporting the metal to market, that this discovery will add very much to the mineral riches of our country, and may contribute to render us independent of foreign nations for an article of the first necessity, particularly to a commercial country. The advantages of possessing an abundant supply of copper, in the neighborhood of the sea, at all times important, will prove, in time of war, incalculably great.

Your committee are aware that mining cannot be successfully carried on without a very large capital; but they believe that, whenever an object of profitable speculation is presented to the enterprise of our fellow citizens, the requisite capital will always flow into that channel. Whilst they are of opinion that all branches of national industry are entitled to the protection of Government, they think that such protection should not be confined to any one undertaking, but should always be general in its operation. They therefore recommend that the prayer of the memorialist be not granted.